The warlike attitude of England and Russia was a strong support to Prussia. After the terrible treaty with France, just signed, her army was more demoralized than ever. Like that of Austria, it had been resting on old traditions and on laurels won by a former generation. The antiquated system virtually made slaves of the common soldiers. Every captain maintained his own company, farming it to the government. One half of the men must be Prussians, the other were the scum of Europe; nearly all were secured by forced enlistment or crimping, and they were all compelled to serve until superannuation released them, when, instead of a pension, they were given a license to beg! It was the interest of every captain to secure the highest efficiency at the least expense, and his soldiers, like costly chattels, were too precious to be risked except under compulsion. The companies had no moral cohesion, and the discipline was necessarily very severe, corporal punishment being inflicted without stint. The principal officers had become venerable creatures of routine. There were majors in the hussars not less than sixty years of age. The Duke of Brunswick, commander-in-chief, — the same who had sold nearly six thousand mercenaries to George III for use in the war of the American Revolution, — a spendthrift, a loose liver, and a martinet^ was seventy-one; Mollendorf was over eighty, Kalkreuth was sixty-six, and even Blticher, the exception, the most youthful and fiery general of them all, was over sixty. The staff having occupied itself for years with an absurd refinement and development of Frederick the Great's system, there were only a few of the younger officers who understood Napoleon's revolutionary tactics and strategy. Unfortunately for the country, the aristocratic pride of their class kept them from setting a just value on the efficiency of the French democrats.